

This record is a partial extract of the original cable. The full text of the original cable is not available.

131236Z Nov 01

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ACTION INR-00

INFO	LOG-00	NP-00	AF-00	A-00	ACQ-00	CIAE-00	INL-00
	DODE-00	DS-00	EUR-00	OIGO-00	UTED-00	VC-00	TEDE-00
	LAB-01	VCE-00	DCP-01	NSAE-00	TEST-00	USIE-00	EPAE-00
	IIP-00	DSCC-00	DRL-02	NFAT-00	SAS-00	/004W	
				-----3D82A0	131320Z	/38	

FM AMEMBASSY HARARE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 0256
INFO NSC WASHDC
AMEMBASSY PRETORIA
AMEMBASSY LUSAKA
AMEMBASSY WINDHOEK
AMEMBASSY GABORONE
AMEMBASSY LILONGWE
AMEMBASSY LONDON

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 HARARE 003365

SIPDIS

AF/PD FOR COX, ROBERTSON, AF/S FOR SCHLACHTER, AF/RA FOR
SWANN, INR/R/MR, NSC FOR JENDAYI FRAZER

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [ZI](#) [PREL](#) [PHUM](#)

SUBJECT: MEDIA REPORT 2002 PRESIDENTIAL BALLOT; HARARE

1. ALTHOUGH NO DATE HAS BEEN SET FOR THE 2002
PRESIDENTIAL POLL DUE EARLY NEXT YEAR, THE MAINSTREAM MEDIA
HAS STARTED RUNNING EDITORIAL COMMENTARIES FOCUSING ON THE
LANDMARK PRESIDENTIAL BALLOT. FOLLOWING ARE EXCERPTS FROM
EDITORIALS FOCUSING ON THE DEBATE OVER PROPOSED AMENDMENTS
TO THE ELECTORAL ACT:

2. UNDER HEADLINE "PREPARING THE GROUND FOR ELECTION
FRAUD," THE NOVEMBER 12 EDITION OF THE INDEPENDENT DAILY
"THE DAILY NEWS" COMMENTS:

"THE GOVERNMENT'S APPROVAL OF ADDITIONAL AMENDMENTS TO
THE ELECTORAL ACT THAT ENTAILS CHANGING REGULATIONS ON
POSTAL VOTING, CAMPAIGNING, POLLING AND ON THE VOTER'S
ROLL ITSELF. . . IS BOTH REGRETTABLE AND DISHEARTENING.
REGRETTABLE BECAUSE THE GOVERNMENT, ARROGANT AS ALWAYS,
DECIDED ON THOSE AMENDMENTS ALONE WITHOUT CONSULTING
OTHER STAKEHOLDERS FOR CONSENSUS. THIS MAKES THE
AMENDMENTS A PARTISAN AFFAIR CLEARLY MEANT TO MAKE IT
EASIER FOR THE GOVERNMENT TO MANIPULATE THE BALLOT IN
FAVOR OF ZANU PF. . . DISHEARTENING BECAUSE THE
AMENDMENTS ARE CLEARLY A SELF-SERVING MOVE DESIGNED TO
MAKE ALL OTHER ASPIRING CONTESTANTS IN THE NEXT AND
SUBSEQUENT ELECTIONS LOSE ALL HOPE OF WINNING AS THE
CUMULATIVE EFFECTS OF THE AMENDMENTS IS TO RENDER THE
POLITICAL PLAYING FIELD IN ZIMBABWE MUCH MORE UNEVEN
THAN IT HAD BEEN HITHERTO. OVER AND ABOVE THE PHYSICAL
DANGERS THOSE WHO BRAVE STANDING AGAINST ZANU PF
CANDIDATES FACE BECAUSE OF THE EVER-PRESENT VIOLENCE THE
PARTY ALWAYS UNLEASHES AGAINST THOSE WHO OPPOSE IT, THE
AMENDMENTS MAKE CONTEST BY ANYONE OUTSIDE ZANU PF A
COSTLY, FUTILE EXERCISE. . . PUT BLUNTLY, THE
GOVERNMENT HAS DEvised AN EASY MECHANISM TO CHEAT ITS

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WAY INTO REMAINING IN POWER. . . THE GOVERNMENT IS
DOING ITS DAMNEDEST TO DISENFRANCHISE ALL ZIMBABWEANS IT
THINKS WILL VOTE FOR THE OPPOSITION. THIS IS CRIMINAL."

3. UNDER HEADLINE "WE CAN HANDLE ELECTIONS ON OUR OWN,"
THE NOVEMBER 9 EDITION OF THE GOVERNMENT-CONTROLLED
WEEKLY "THE MANICA POST" COMMENTS:

"A PROPOSAL BY THE GOVERNMENT TO AMEND THE ELECTORAL ACT
TO GIVE POWERS TO THE ELECTORAL SUPERVISORY COMMISSION
(ESC) TO RECRUIT, TRAIN AND DEPLOY ELECTION MONITORS IN
ALL ELECTIONS, BE THEY PRESIDENTIAL OR PARLIAMENTARY BY-
ELECTIONS, SHOULD BE WELCOMED BY EVERYONE WHO IS PROUD
TO BE ZIMBABWEAN. . . PREVIOUSLY THE ESC HAS RELIED ON
MONITORS TRAINED BY NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS, AN
UNHEALTHY SITUATION CONSIDERING THAT THE SUPERVISORY
BODY WAS NOT DIRECTLY INVOLVED IN THEIR TRAINING. THIS
PUT ESC IN AN AWKWARD POSITION. HOW, FOR INSTANCE,
COULD IT BE IN CHARGE OF PEOPLE WHOSE TRAINING IT HAD
LITTLE TO DO WITH? ON THE OTHER HAND, HOW MUCH CAN THE
NGOS BE TRUSTED TO TRAIN ELECTION MONITORS WHEN SOME OF
THEM ARE KNOWN TO BE HOSTILE TO THE ZANU PF GOVERNMENT?
. . . IT IS HIGH TIME THE OPPOSITION IS DISABUSED OF THE

NOTION THAT ZIMBABWEANS CANNOT HANDLE THEIR OWN AFFAIRS.
..."

14. UNDER HEADLINE "THE HOUR HAS COME," THE NOVEMBER 8 EDITION OF THE INDEPENDENT WEEKLY "THE FINANCIAL GAZETTE" COMMENTS:

"ALL THE PIECES OF ZERO HOUR OF ZIMBABWE BEING DESIGNED
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BY THE RULING ZANU PF PARTY ARE FINALLY COMING INTO PLACE, HERALDING FOREBODING TIMES FOR LONG-SUFFERING CITIZENS AND CHALLENGING THE CONSCIENCE OF ALL RIGHT-THINKING MEN AND WOMEN ACROSS THE GLOBE. AFTER MUCH TIME AND ENERGY HAS BEEN SPENT ON AN EMPTY DIALOGUE WITH THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY AND ZIMBABWEANS, ZANU PF HAS NOW TAKEN OFF THE GLOVES TO SHOW ITS TRUE COLORS: A MONSTER WHICH BELIEVES IT HAS BECOME LARGER THAN LIFE. THUS THE GOVERNING PARTY WILL STAGE-MANAGE THE UPCOMING PRESIDENTIAL BALLOT, WHICH ITS LEADER PRESIDENT ROBERT MUGABE COULD LOSE, UNDER ITS OWN SO-CALLED RULES AND ANYONE UNHAPPY WITH THIS STATE OF AFFAIRS CAN CRY OR YELL UNTIL HELL FREEZES. SO FOREIGN OBSERVERS WILL ONLY BE ALLOWED INTO ZIMBABWE AT THE BEHEST OF THE GOVERNMENT. . .WHICH MEANS THAT ONLY THOSE PUPPETS FROM 'FRIENDLY COUNTRIES' WILL BE INVITED TO LEND THEIR OBVIOUS SUPPORT TO A GIGANTIC FRAUD. . . ZIMBABWEANS AND THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY MUST THUS PREPARE FOR THE VERY WORST: ZIMBABWEANS WILL HAVE TO DEFEND THEMSELVES AGAINST TERROR GANGS AND VOTE OVERWHELMINGLY TO END THIS TYRANNY WHILE THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY

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	SAS-00	/003W					

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P 131236Z NOV 01
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TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 0257
INFO NSC WASHDC
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UNCLAS SECTION 02 OF 02 HARARE 003365

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TAKES WHATEVER MEASURES ARE NECESSARY TO ENSURE THAT
DEMOCRACY AND SANITY PREVAIL. . . ."
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